

## **GREEN COUNTY 2011 BUDGET REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The proposed budget for 2011 as presented here requires a preliminary tax levy of \$16,141,129, which represents actual operating costs for Green County. It is the intent of the Finance Committee to apply projected 2010 sales tax collections to the levy to provide property tax relief to the taxpayers of Green County. Our recommendation is to apply \$1,800,000 of sales tax revenue to reduce the net levy to \$14,341,129. In comparison to the 2010 levy, the 2011 tax levy provides for a decrease of \$38,125. The levy rate for 2011 will be \$5.527 per \$1,000 of property value.

Municipalities continue to be limited by the state to levy increases of 3% or the amount of net new construction whichever is greater. New construction growth in Green County was less than 1%. The entire state has seen a decrease in property values; Green County is down about 1.6%. Because of these decreases in property values, the Committee chose not to use the full levy limit for 2011.

2011 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the voter approved referendum allowing up to \$890,000 per year to offset the costs of operating the Pleasant View Nursing Home. We have levied \$886,782 for the nursing home in 2011. The tax levy also includes the following amounts that are excluded from the levy limit: Debt Service payments of \$887,151, Bridge & Culvert Repairs of \$27,335 and Library payments of \$417,972.

We are trying to sustain a workable balance in the undesignated general fund. Our auditors have recommended that we maintain a balance of 10-20% of our next year general fund expenses as unassigned fund balance. Our budget for 2011 provides for an increase in this balance to \$2,100,000, slightly less than 12%.

We have set aside funds in the 2011 budget for capital projects of \$200,000; partial funding for a sprinkler system that must be installed at the nursing home by 2013, total costs of this project are estimated at \$524,132. We have also set aside \$75,000 for updating computer hardware and software throughout the County.

Personnel costs continue to account for a large portion of county expenses, about 55% in the 2011 budget; slightly more than 2010 due to increased costs of health insurance and state retirement contributions. The County has proposed changing from our current self funded plan to the plan offered through the State of Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds. If the unions agree to this change, the County will be responsible for the run out of all claims occurring under the previous provider agreement. There are some funds available for this run out, and we have set aside an additional \$250,000 to cover these claims, which may be nearly \$1,000,000.

As the State continues to impose mandates on counties, often without funding, we are forced to do more with less. Departments were asked to cut operating expenses wherever possible again this year, a difficult task as we deal with increased expenses such as utilities, supplies, and fuel. We want to thank the department heads and their committees for the consistent hard work with the Finance Committee to develop a workable budget.

Our job, as a County, is to provide services to the citizens of Green County. The cost of maintaining service levels continues to rise without increases in state aid. Department heads have been diligent in pursuing grants for new programs in an effort to provide additional needed services, nevertheless county contributions will have to increase or a reduction in services will be inevitable.

We urge you to study this document carefully and review the supplementary schedules that are included. Questions regarding this budget may be directed to any of the various department heads that provided the basic data contained in the budget, the Finance Committee, or the Accounting office. We submit this 2011 Green County Budget for your consideration and approval.

Finance & Accounting Committee

Harvey Mandel, Chairman